

## Message Text

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42

ACTION NEA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 PM-03 SP-02 NSC-05 NSCE-00 INR-05

CIAE-00 EUR-08 MC-01 /045 W  
----- 000361

R 111300Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY SANAA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5703

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

SECDEF WASHDC

USCINCEUR

USMTM DHAHRAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANAA 1461

LIMDIS

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MASS, MARR, SA, YE, US

SUBJECT: MODERNIZATION OF THE YAR ARMED FORCES

REF: JIDDA 4141; SANA 1460

1. NEEDLESS TO SAY WE ARE GREATLY DISAPPOINTED AT RESULTS  
OF JUNE 9 MEETING BETWEEN AMBASSADOR AKINS AND PRINCE SULTAN.  
WE CERTAINLY HOPE THAT THE LATTER'S RATHER OFF-HAND COMMENTS  
DO

NOT REPRESENT THE FINAL SAUDI REPLY TO WHAT WAS AFTER ALL  
A VERY CAREFULLY CONSIDERED AND DRAFTED US PROPOSAL.

2. AS FAR AS THE CONTRACTS ARE CONCERNED, WE DOUBT THAT THE  
YARG WILL POST ANY OBJECTIONS IF THEY ARE SIGNED BETWEEN THE  
USG AND SAUDI ARABIA. IN FACT, WE HAD ORIGINALLY  
PROPOSED THIS PROCEDURE BOTH TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT  
SAUDI SENSIBILITIES AS WELL AS TO SPEED UP THE PAPER  
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WORK INVOLVED.

3. MEANWHILE, WE CAN UNDERSTAND WHY THE SAUDIS MUST WAIT FOR PUBLICATION OF THEIR NEW BUDGET IN EARLY JULY BEFORE DECIDING ON THE YEMENI ARMY MODERNIZATION PROGRAM. FOR THEM TO FOCUS ON THE PROJECTED YEMENI ELECTIONS AS ANOTHER REASON TO POSTPONE A DECISION, HOWEVER, SMACKS OF CASUISTRY. ACCORDING TO OUR INFORMATION, THESE ELECTIONS WILL NOT TAKE PLACE UNTIL LATE THIS YEAR, AT THE EARLIEST. (SEE SANA 1460) IT SEEMS TO US THE SAUDIS HAVE BEEN USING VARIOUS EXCUSES OVER THE PAST YEAR TO RATIONALIZE THEIR PROCRASTINATION OR INABILITY TO MAKE UP THEIR MINDS. FIRST IT WAS THE UNSUITABILITY OF FORMER PRESIDENT IRYANI; THEN IT WAS THE UNACCEPTABILITY OF AL-AYNI'S GOVERNMENT; AND THEN MOST RECENTLY IT WAS THE UNDESIRABILITY OF THE ABU LUHUM CLIQUE; AND NOW IT IS THE QUESTION OF ELECTIONS.

\*. YEMEN'S PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS WILL NOT MAKE ONE BIT OF DIFFERENCE TO THE "NATURE AND DIRECTION OF THE GOVERNMENT" WHICH THE SAUDIS ARE AIDING. HAMDI IS FIRMLY IN CONTROL AND THE SAUDIS KNOW THIS AND WHAT IT MEANS AS FAR AS "NATURE AND DIRECTION OF GOVERNMENT" ARE CONCERNED. WHAT WILL MAKE A DIFFERENCE OVER THE COMING MONTHS IS THE ATTITUDE OF THE YEMENI ARMY WHICH HAS BEEN PROMISED FOR ALMOST TWO YEARS NOW THAT NEW EQUIPMENT FROM THE WEST WOULD SOON REPLACE THAT FROM THE SOVIET UNION AS PROOF OF SAUDI SUPPORT FOR YEMEN'S PRESENT MODERATE POLICIES.

5. IN THIS REGARD, IT IS INTERESTING TO NOTE THAT SAUDI ARABIA AMBASSADOR SUDAYRI RECENTLY TOLD THE BRITISH AMBASSADOR THAT THE UNITED STATES WAS TO BLAME FOR THE DELAY IN THE MODERNIZATION OF THE YEMENI ARMY. IN ELABORATING TO THE BRITISH AMBASSADOR, SUDAYRI SAID THAT US PROPOSALS ENVISAGE "EXPENSIVE EQUIPMENT" WITH INORDINATELY LONG LEAD TIMES AND DELIVERY DATES. HE INTIMATED THAT THE BRITISH OUGHT TO GET INVOLVED AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO THE AMERICANS. AT THE SAME TIME, HIS MILITARY ATTACHE HAS BEEN REPORTEDLY TELLING ONE AND ALL THAT NOTHING CAN BE DONE ON MILITARY MODERNIZATION" UNTIL THE LOCAL SITUATION FURTHER CLARIFIES". I AM SURE THIS KIND OF TALK HAS GOTTEN BACK TO THE YEMENI LEADERS AND I DON'T HAVE TO EXPATiate CONFIDENTIAL

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ON WHAT KIND OF EFFECT IT MUST BE HAVING ON THEM AFTER EVERYTHING HAMDI HAS BEEN TOLD OF OUR READINESS TO HELP AND AFTER EVERYTHING HAMDI HAS DONE TO STABILIZE, IN SAUDI ARABIA'S FAVOR, THE LOCAL POLITICAL SITUATION OVER THE LAST YEAR AND PARTICULARLY OVER THE LAST TWO MONTHS.

6. FROM MY LIMITED VANTAGE POINT IN SANA I DON'T SEE WHERE WE GO FROM HERE WITH THE SAUDIS, BUT I DO SEE

THAT IF THE SAUDIS DON'T BEGIN TO MOVE SOON, HAMDI IS GOING  
TO HAVE A DIFFICULT TIME WITH HIS YOUNG COLLEAGUES IN THE  
ARMY, WHICH HAS EMERGED OVER THE LAST YEAR AS THE MAJOR POWER  
FACTOR IN THIS COUNTRY.  
SCOTES

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** Z  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** MILITARY ASSISTANCE, ARMED FORCES  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 11 JUN 1975  
**Decaption Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Decaption Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** RowellE0  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1975SANAA01461  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D750203-0958  
**From:** SANAA  
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**Line Count:** 120  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION NEA  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** LIMDIS  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** LIMDIS  
**Reference:** 75 JIDDA 4141, 75 SANA 1460  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** RowellE0  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 27 JUN 2003  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <27 JUN 2003 by CunninFX>; APPROVED <04 NOV 2003 by RowellE0>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
06 JUL 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** MODERNIZATION OF THE YAR ARMED FORCES  
**TAGS:** PFOR, MASS, MARR, SA, YE, US  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006